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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT

POL PIPELINE DEVELOPMENTS, NORTH VIETNAM AND LAOS

NPIC/R-108/69
DECEMBER 1969

Declass Review by NIMA/DOD

GROUP 1: EXCLUDED FROM
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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT

POL PIPELINE DEVELOPMENTS, NORTH VIETNAM AND LAOS

DECEMBER 1969

NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION CENTER

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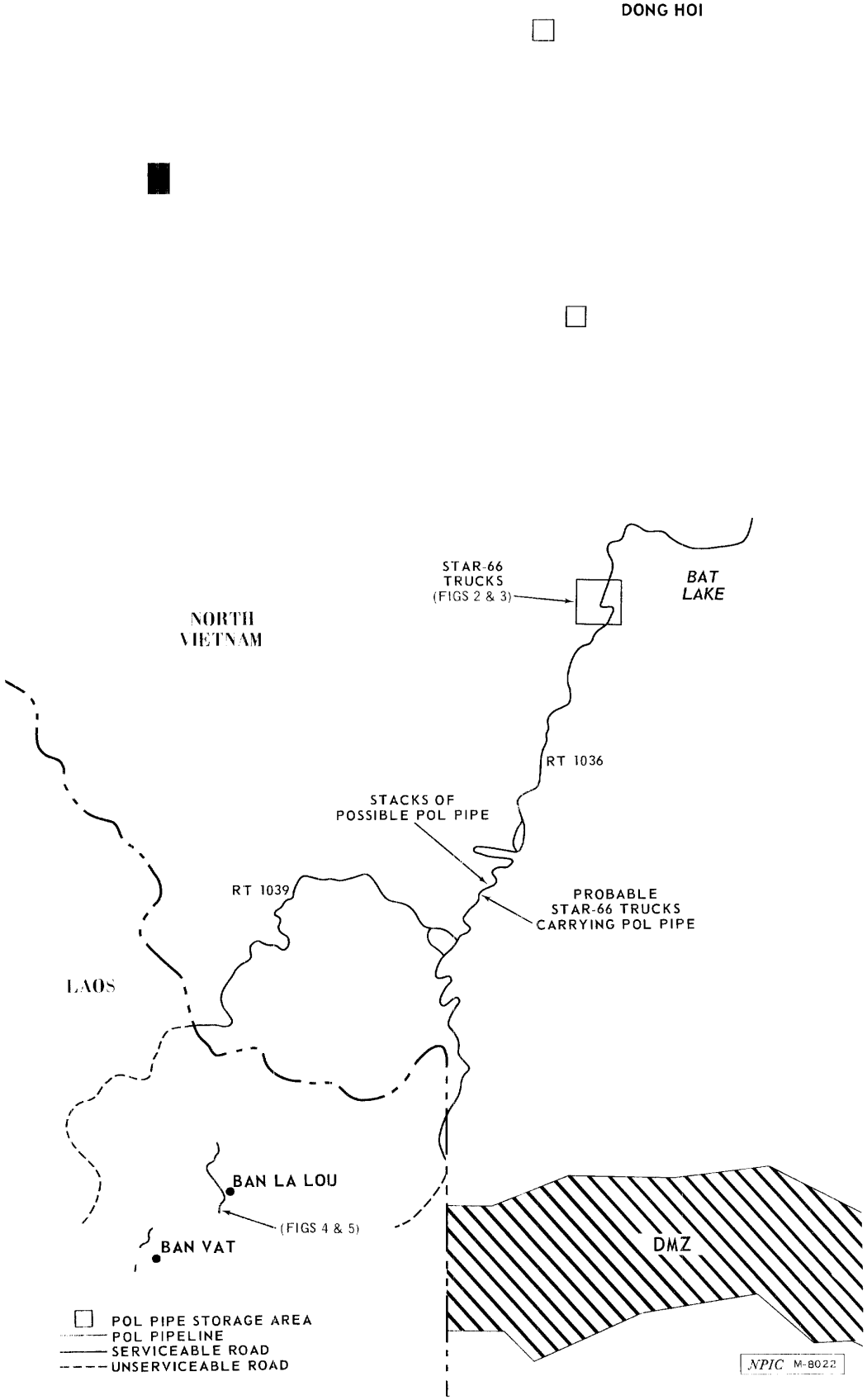

FIGURE 1. POL PIPELINE DEVELOPMENTS, NORTH VIETNAM AND LAOS

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SUMMARY

Indications of North Vietnamese intentions to expand their POL pipeline facilities into southern North Vietnam and probably Laos were first observed on photography of [redacted] Quantities of POL pipe were observed in the Bat Lake region and in the Dong Hoi area, and Star-66 trucks carrying POL pipe were identified at Bat Lake and on Route 1036 north of its junction with Route 1039. However, actual pipeline construction has not yet been observed in these areas of North Vietnam. Late [redacted] photography disclosed a POL pipeline at Ban La Lou, Laos, west of the DMZ; subsequent photography revealed the pipeline to be at least 2.1 nautical miles (nm) long and extending in a north-south direction. Another approximately 800-meter (2,624-foot) segment of pipeline and pipeline trace was observed on photography of [redacted] southwest of the existing segment. The pipeline at Ban La Lou has undergone heavy airstrikes and is not considered operational; however, its existence indicated that the North Vietnamese are attempting to develop a POL distribution system in the southern Panhandle of North Vietnam extending into Laos.

BASIC DESCRIPTION

First indications that the North Vietnamese were planning a POL distribution system in the panhandle area appeared on photography of [redacted] when POL pipe storage was identified along Route 1036 in the Bat Lake and Dong Hoi areas (Figure 1). POL pipe sections were identified in storage on photography of [redacted] approximately 1 nm west-southwest of Bat Lake in at least six separate locations, all within 1 nm of each other (Figures 1 and 2). In addition, 11 probable Star-66 trucks, six loaded with pipe sections, were observed in the same area (Figures 1 and 3).

Star-66 trucks with similar pipe sections have been observed since [redacted] on Route 15 and in the Vinh area because of construction of a previously identified operational pipe system. Two pipe storage areas were also identified near Dong Hoi in [redacted]. One area, 1.4 nm west of Dong Hoi, contained several stacks of probable POL pipe. The other area, 3.5 nm south of Dong Hoi, contained 12 similar stacks of probable POL pipe sections.

Pipeline-related activities were also observed further south on Route 1036 in [redacted]. Two stacks of probable POL pipe similar to that previously observed at Bat Lake were observed on photography of [redacted] along Route 1036, 8.1 nm southwest of Bat Lake. However, no POL pipeline was evident. On photography of [redacted], two probable Star-66 trucks were carrying possible POL pipe south on Route 1036, 1.5 nm north of its junction with Route 1039.

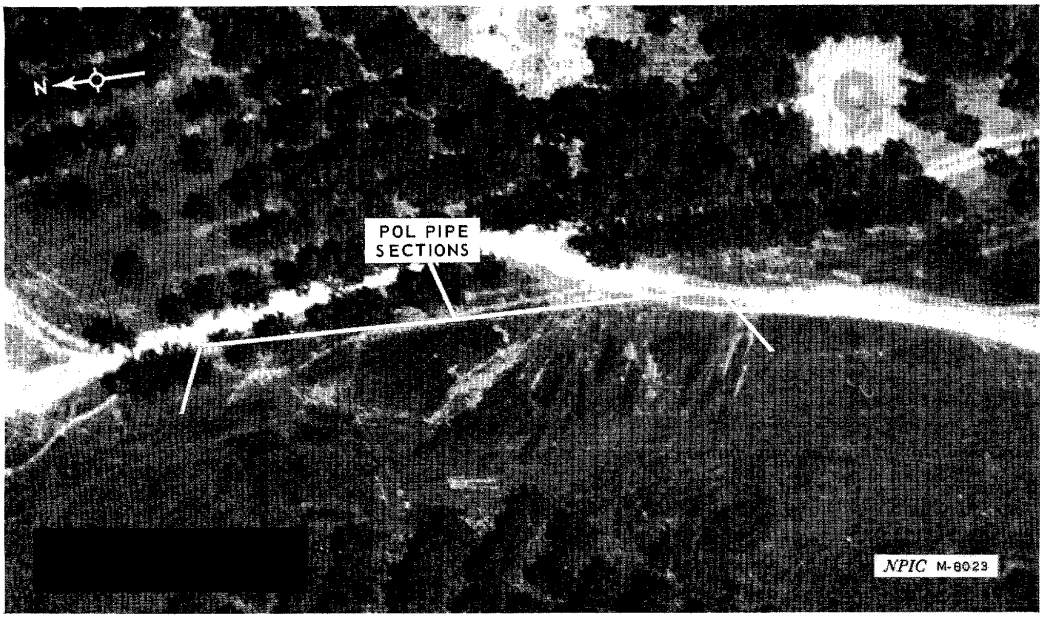

FIGURE 2. POL PIPE STORAGE, BAT LAKE AREA, NORTH VIETNAM

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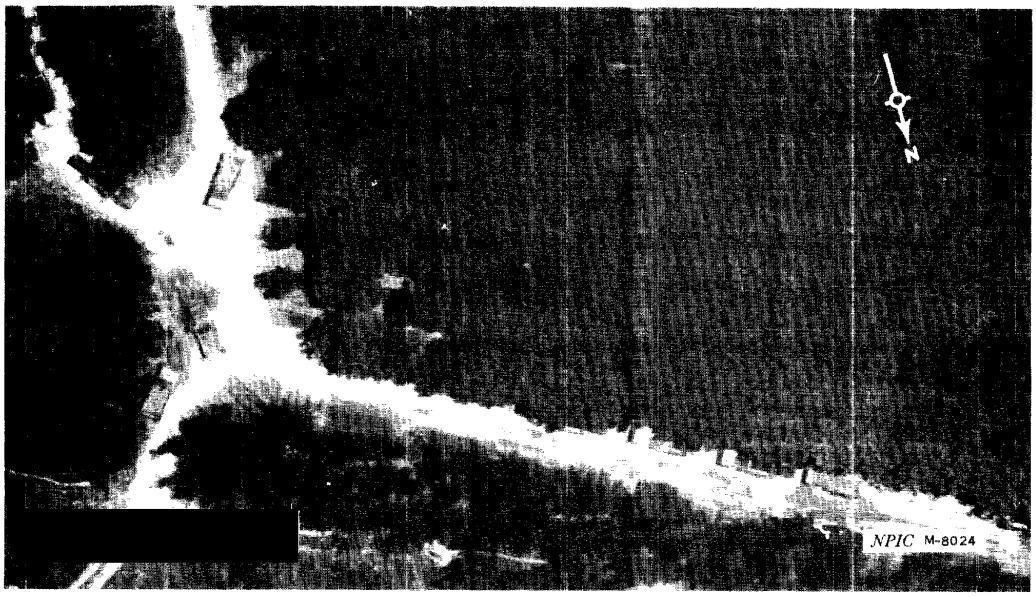

25X1D

FIGURE 3. STAR-66 TRUCKS WITH POL PIPE, BAT LAKE AREA, NORTH VIETNAM

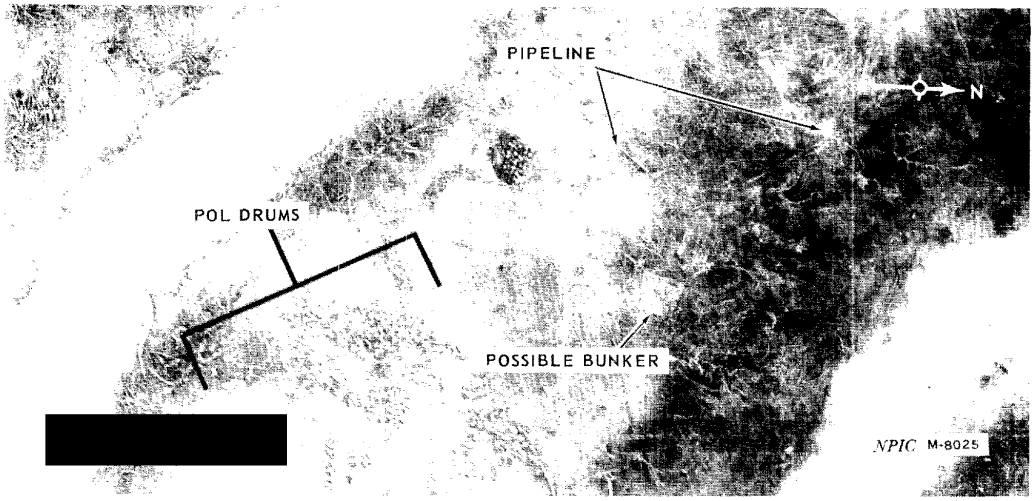

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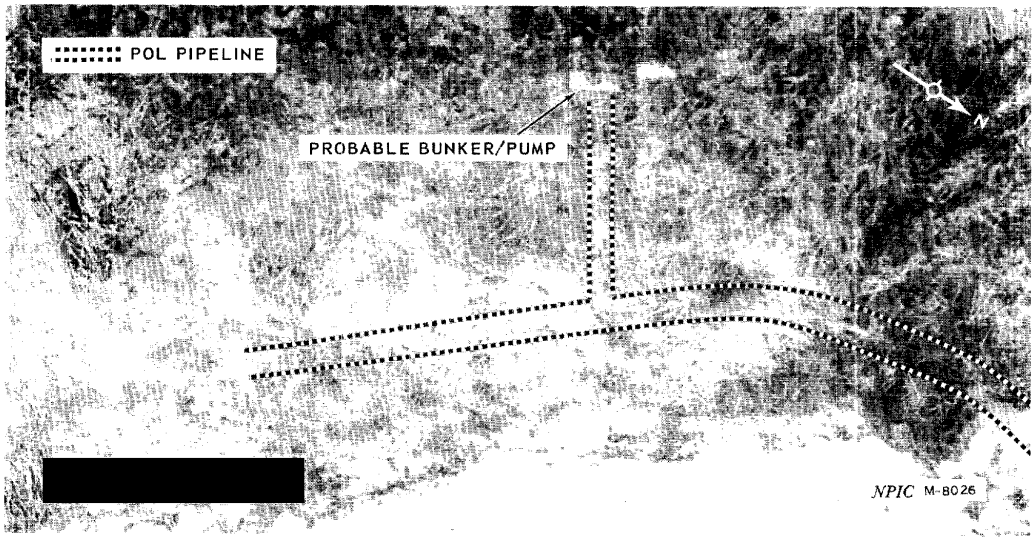
FIGURE 4. POL PIPELINE AND DRUM STORAGE AREA, BAN LA LOU, LAOS



25X1D

FIGURE 5. POSSIBLE BUNKER/PUMP STATION, BAN LA LOU, LAOS

25X1D

25X1D

The first indication of actual pipeline construction was observed in [redacted] A segment of POL pipeline was observed near Ban La Lou, Laos, 6.5 nm west of the DMZ and 3.5 nm south-southeast of the point where Route 1039 crosses the North Vietnam/Laos border. Subsequent photography revealed the segment to extend 2.1 nm along the west bank of the Houay La Lou (stream) in a north-south direction. A POL drum storage area containing approximately 200 drums and a possible bunker were observed at the southern end of the segment (Figure 4). Another possible bunker/pumping station was observed just north of the drum storage area. A single pipeline enters this station (Figure 5).

Available photography and heavy tree canopy prevent determining the direction and northern origin of the pipeline segment. However, photography of 25X1D [redacted] revealed an approximately 800-meter (2,624-foot) segment of probable pipeline or pipeline trace 2.1 nm southwest of the Ban La Lou segment near Ban Vat, indicating a further westward extension along the river.

The Laotian pipeline segment has undergone heavy airstrikes and is considered not operational. However, its existence is an indication of North Vietnamese intentions to build a POL distribution system utilizing the protection afforded in North Vietnam before extending the line into Laos. Subsequent reports indicate work is continuing on the pipeline in the Xe Bang Hiang valley west of Ban Vat.

REFERENCES

IMAGERY 25X1D

[redacted]

MAPS AND CHARTS

USAF. Series SAO-5, 1st ed, scale 1:250,000 (UNCLASSIFIED)

NPIC Project 170002NG

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